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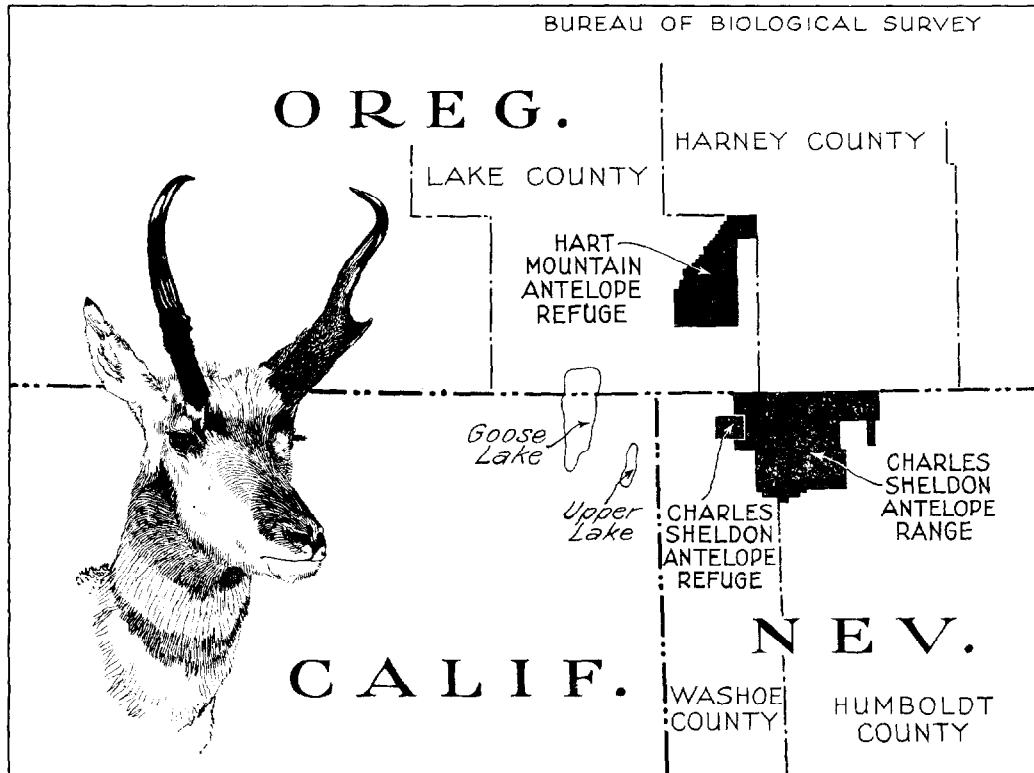
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ANTELOPE AT HOME ON THE RANGE
IN TWO NEW FEDERAL SANCTUARIES

Recently Established Refuge and Range Give Pronghorns
U. S. Protection in Their Favorite Fawning and
Feeding Grounds in Oregon and Nevada

A 276,000-acre refuge and a nearby 539,000-acre winter and early spring range for the protection and perpetuation of the antelope, one of America's swiftest and most elusive game animals, have been established in the heart of its native range in Southeastern Oregon and Northwestern Nevada, announces the



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Biological Survey, of the U. S. Department of Agriculture.

The refuge, to be known as the Hart Mountain Antelope Refuge, is in Lake County, Oreg. This area is a part of the range for big-game animals established in 1935 in connection with the organization of Western grazing districts under the Taylor Grazing Act of 1934.

The new range is in Humboldt and Washoe Counties in Nevada, about 20 miles southeast of the Hart Mountain area. It adjoins and supplements the 34,280-acre Charles Sheldon Antelope refuge established in Nevada 6 years ago, and has been similarly named the Charles Sheldon Antelope Range.

Fawning Grounds Protected

Some of the Hart Mountain antelope and practically all the animals that summer on the old Charles Sheldon refuge move in the winter for feed to the lower altitudes in the nearby Nevada area now established as a Federal antelope range. In the spring these animals drift back to the two refuges. Sagebrush areas in these two refuges are favorite fawning grounds for the antelope, or pronghorns. The does "cache" their newly-born fawns, often twins and occasionally triplets, among the rocks and low sage. They wander far from their young for feed and water, but return twice daily to feed them.

Although the new refuge and range have been established primarily for antelope, the Biological Survey says that both areas are also suitable for native deer, sage grouse, fur animals, waterfowl, and other wildlife with which they are well stocked. The Biological Survey will administer the Hart Mountain refuge, and under the executive order the Secretaries of Agriculture and the Interior are to be in charge of the conservation and development of wildlife on the new Charles Sheldon range. The Secretary of the Interior will also regulate livestock grazing on the public domain of the range.

Before unrestricted hunting and the advance of civilization reduced the numbers of antelope to small scattered bands, these animals were widely distributed in the sagebrush plains in the region where Nevada, Oregon, Idaho, and California meet, and in other semi-arid regions of the West. Predators and disease also made deep inroads into their ranks. Since then protection by State laws and the control of coyotes and other predators, particularly on the fawning grounds, have made the pronghorn a familiar sight again in many Western regions. It is conservatively estimated that there are at least 10,000 pronghorns in the Nevada, Oregon, and California area as compared to the dwindling thousand that existed there 16 years ago. Wyoming today has probably the largest number of antelope in any State. In Wyoming these animals range in scattered groups over much of the plains and desert region. Authorities have recently estimated that there are 15,000 antelope in this State.

Feed is Big Problem

The new refuge and range, says Dr. Ira N. Gabrielson, Chief of the Biological Survey, not only provide additional protection for antelope but they also insure a more adequate feed supply. He points out that the chief problem connected with the conservation of pronghorns is that of providing areas where they can feed. For several years these animals have faced serious feed shortage as a result of continued subnormal rainfall and overgrazing of their range by livestock. The badly over-grazed range on the Charles Sheldon refuge has, however, made remarkable recovery under protection and slightly improved moisture conditions. Purchase by the Biological Survey of privately owned lands within the Oregon refuge and Nevada range for supplying antelope with forage and water, and to enable the development of the areas for waterfowl and other wildlife, is well under way.

The number of antelope has materially increased since the Charles Sheldon refuge was established for the protection of their fawning grounds and summer range. Through the National Association of Audubon Societies and the Boone and Crockett Club, funds were provided for the purchase of private lands in the refuge, and Public Works Projects have provided for the fence, administration buildings, water development and conservation, patrol roads, and firebreaks. The C.C.C. has also helped to improve the refuge. The barbed-wire fence that encloses the refuge excludes livestock but permits antelope and deer to enter and leave. Antelope simply "duck" under the lower strand of wire often at full speed without touching it.

In 1921 it was estimated that the number of antelope on the summer range in the Hart Mountain area has dwindled to 200. Since then the number has increased to about 4,000 -- owing largely to coyote-control.

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